



*Protecting our land, air and water
to preserve our way of life in harmony with all species.*

Our Earth, Our Home ... Let's Protect It by Changing Simple Habits **“Shade it to Save It!” in May**

The staff of the Community Development Department, Environmental Protection & Natural Resources Division, (CDD/EPNR), we are encouraging you to make every day – Earth Day.

Because protecting the environment is everyone's responsibility, we've launched a Clean & Green Campaign to celebrate Earth Year. Every month, in this column, we are showing you how you can change one habit that can make a real and positive difference for our land, our air and our water. At the end of the 12 months, you will have adopted 12 new habits to help protect your home.

During the month of May, we ask you to **“Shade it to Save it”** by following a few simple steps.

Make it a habit to “Shade it to Save it!”

The velvet mesquite, honey mesquite, foothills paloverde, Mexican paloverde and the Catclaw acacia are species of trees that provide a good source of shade.

Traditionally, the velvet and honey mesquites were used as a fuel source for cooking. The wood from the mesquite trees is also used utilitarian purposes to make war clubs and other household items such as spoons. Seeds from the Foothills and Mexican species of Palo Verdes are edible. The seeds can be eaten fresh from the tree or dried. Dry seeds can be roasted and ground to make a drink, similar to chi, commonly referred to as pinole. Iron wood is leguminous which helps to feed the soil. Iron wood seeds are also edible. The wood was utilized as a heating source and also for crafting war clubs, digging and planting sticks. Wood from Catclaw acacia trees were used to create tools and also used as firewood.

Plant 3 large trees around your house. Deciduous trees, which shed their leaves during the winter, should be placed on the south and west sides of your home. These trees provide shade that block heat during the summer and by dropping their leaves in the fall, they let the sun warm your house in winter. (U.S. Department of Energy)

Why is it important to “Shade it to Save it?”

Just three strategically placed trees around a house can save up to 30% of energy use. (U.S. Forest Service for Urban Forest Research).

Trees or shrubs planted to shade air conditioners help cool a building more efficiently, using less electricity. A unit operating in the shade uses as much as 10% less electricity than the same one operating in the sun. (U.S. Department of Energy)

This results in burning less fossil fuels to generate electricity for cooling and heating and reduces the need for power plants.

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To know more about the Clean & Green Campaign or to be part of the Healthy Habits Team, contact the EPNR Hotline at 480-362-7500 or by email EPNR@SRPMIC-nsn.gov